

Her Year

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Category: Casualty

Genre: Drama, Romance

Language: English

Characters: Max W., Zoe H.

Pairings: Zoe H./Max W.

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2016-04-10 23:17:35

Updated: 2016-04-10 23:17:35

Packaged: 2016-04-27 20:16:26

Rating: T

Chapters: 1

Words: 2,076

Publisher: [www.fanfiction.net](http://www.fanfiction.net)

Summary: An important year in Zoe's life with each chapter a different season. Bit AU, Zax pairing, rated T just to be safe. Based on an anonymous tumblr prompt. Thanks for reading, Araliae  
xx

Her Year

\*\*Hello! \*\*

\*\*So this is based on an anonymous prompt on tumblr asking for a year of a characters life in seasons. I've decided to do it with Zoe and make it primarily a Zax fic, you know me by now. This was a great prompt, so thank you!\*\*

\*\*Thank you to the two anonymous prompts left in the reviews for HCSC, I will be writing those next and they are great ideas! I cannot wait to write them.\*\*

\*\*I hope you enjoy the first chapter of this and remember that reviews make my day, week, month and year! Thanks always,\*\*

\*\*Araliae xx\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Zoe's heels clicked against the pavement as she strode towards the hospital entrance. Her mind darted from thought to thought in worry of what was about to happen, before finally resting on thoughts of the nearby Cherry Blossom tree. Its flowers were now in full bloom and one flew from the tree and landed at Zoe's feet. She bent down slowly and cradled the blossom in her hands. It was May and spring was slowly drifting away. Zoe carefully tucked the flower into her pocket and remembered what she was doing. She took a deep breath and

walked inside.<p>

She knocked on Connie's office door quickly, determined not to change her mind. Her knuckles were white from clutching the envelope that was in her hands. Her breathing was laboured however much she tried to calm it down.

"Come in" an icy voice called from inside. Zoe whimpered slightly before steadying herself and opening the door. She slipped inside and shut it behind her.

"Zoe. To what do I owe the pleasure?" Connie smiled slightly, as was becoming a more regular occurrence recently. Zoe smiled back shakily.

"Well Connie, I'm here toâ€¦I'm here toâ€¦" Zoe stumbled over her words and closed her eyes. She could feel a headache appearing in her temples. Connie's brow furrowed.

"Are you quite well Zoe?" Connie asked, standing from her desk in concern. Zoe shook her head and held her hand up as a signal for Connie to sit down. Connie didn't take orders however and walked over to Zoe, putting a comforting hand on her shoulder. "Talk to me Zoe"

"I'm resigning!" Zoe blurted out suddenly, thrusting the envelope at Connie, "I can't work here anymore, not after what happened." Zoe wiped a single tear from her cheek and bit her lip with guilt. Connie sighed deeply and didn't take the letter.

"It wasn't your fault Zoe," Connie began but Zoe looked her right in the eye as she replied.

"No Connie, it wasn't. But I blame myself. That girl died because I didn't diagnose her correctly, full stop. I can't walk the corridors without thinking about that. I'll get over it, in time, however I need to have a fresh start. I have for a while now. I leave this evening," Zoe explained slowly, relaxing a little with each sentence.

Connie was speechless by the end of Zoe's outburst. She opened her mouth to disagree but closed it again, resigned to the fact that Zoe wasn't changing her mind. Connie almost chuckled at the stubbornness of the woman she had grown to call a friend.

"Where are you going?" Connie asked softly, folding her arms.

"America" Zoe confirmed, once again attempting to hand Connie her letter. Connie reluctantly took it and nodded to her.

"You'll always have a place here Zoe," she said solemnly, holding out her hand to shake. Zoe ignored her hand and pulled her in for a hug. Connie hesitated but soon returned her hug, s bittersweet ending.

"Bye Connie," Zoe smiled sadly, before turning to leave. Just as she got to the door she turned back quickly, "Tell the others I've gone tomorrow. And tell them I'm sorry."

Connie nodded quickly and went back to her desk, trying to hide her sorrow at Zoe leaving. She was her only real friend at Holby, what would she do without her?

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><p>Zoe breathed out slowly as she felt the bump of the plane landing. It hadn't exactly been a smooth flight and Zoe was quite relieved to simply be alive. Some families were cheering towards the back of the plane. She smiled briefly, her first real smile in quite a long time. Her smiles had recently been tight, small and rare. Fake. She couldn't even remember the last time she truly laughed.<p>

She got out of her chair, grabbed her hand luggage and walked down the aisle amongst the chaos. As she saw the sunshine on the other side of the door, her heart leaped. A new beginning. That's all she wanted. She was joining Sahlia Hospital in California as a consultant in the ED the next day and she was far too excited for her age. She felt like a child on Christmas Eve.

Slowly and deliberately, she stepped out into the unknown. She instantly had to cover her eyes and struggle for her sunglasses. Putting them on, she finally managed to take in her surroundings. There wasn't a cloud in the sky and the sky was one of the purest blues she'd ever seen. Another genuine smile fluttered against her lips.

Zoe rolled her eyes as she made it to the luggage conveyor belt, sitting on a nearby chair as she waited for her suitcase. And she waited. And waited. Around an hour later her leopard print suitcase emerged from the flaps and Zoe could feel herself want to squeal with excitement. She rushed over and struggled with her bag, pulling it off of the belt with a grunt. Most people had now left, thankfully, and didn't see her embarrassing struggle. She composed herself, walking quickly out of the area.

She entered the room in which travellers with cars booked met their drivers. Zoe cursed as she realised she hadn't ordered a taxi. She scanned the names that drivers were holding up as she walked past, hardly paying attention. Suddenly she stopped in her tracks. A young, brown-haired man looking like he was about to fall asleep was holding her name, Dr Zoe Hanna. Confused, she wandered over to him.

"Um, I didn't order a taxi?" Zoe began, a little flustered as she got closer to the man. He was very attractive, his hair messy and his eyes a sparkling blue. He didn't help the situation when he looked up and grinned at her, sending her heart racing.

"I know, but you've got one," the man grinned wider, if it was even possible, "I'm Max, a porter at Sahlia. They asked me to pick you up, so here I am."

Zoe blinked at his English accent. She couldn't help herself. "You're English?" she said before inwardly scolding herself, grimacing. Way to make a good first impression. Max, however, seemed to find her turmoil hilarious, laughing away.

"I thought you were meant to be the clever one?" Max retorted before swiftly taking Zoe's suitcase and heading towards the door. Zoe found

herself gaping after him for a second before she woke up and followed behind. She had to run a little to catch him up.

"So why did they ask you?" Zoe asked, wanting to get to know the mysterious man.

"Because I am trusted member of the hospital who is known for their excellent skills in delivering what has been asked of them," Max said in a deadpan. Zoe raised an eyebrow at him. Max shrugged, "Or it could be the fact that I don't do much actual work and when they were talking about it I was standing about 10 yards away."

Zoe found herself grinning for the first time inâ€|she didn't know how long. Max chuckled to himself also. They made it to the automatic doors and stepped outside, the sun's rays hitting Zoe in the face once more. She fumbled for her sunglasses in her bag again and put them on. Max glanced at her and smiled.

"Posh," he commented and Zoe smirked.

"No. Fabulous," Zoe said seriously, trying to keep a straight face. Max stopped and turned to her, mirroring her serious face. They stood staring at each other for a few seconds before dissolving into fits of laughter together. Zoe didn't even notice that she couldn't remember when she had last laughed, she was so happy. A tear of mirth escaped and Max wiped it away with the pad of his thumb. This shut Zoe up as she felt a spark ignite in her cheek, the warmth of it spreading throughout her entire body. Max looked surprised too, as if he had the same feeling.

"That was weird," Max whispered, looking at his thumb in confusion.

"Yeah," Zoe breathed, daring to look at Max again. He caught her gaze and they stared at each other for the second time that day. Except this gaze held something much deeper than laughter. Max took a step towards her and Zoe snapped out of her trance.

"We better go," Zoe announced, smoothing down her hair and looking away from him. She thought she heard Max sigh but couldn't be sure.

"Of course," Max said softly. They walked in silence to the car, tension thick in the air. Max recognised this and tried to lighten the mood.

"M'lady," Max smiled, opening the passenger door with a flourish. Zoe giggled and sank into the seat. Max closed her door and wandered round to his side, getting in the car. He turned the key in the ignition and grinned over at Zoe.

"Welcome to America, Zoe Hanna," he said quietly, grinning once again as he raced out of the car park. As Zoe laughed at his antics, she was beginning to think that America might just be alright after all.

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><p>"And this is where you'll be staying," Max explained as the pair climbed the stairs to Zoe's apartment. Zoe leaned against the railing

for a moment to rest her feet, silently wishing she wasn't wearing heels. Max continued his ascent, oblivious. He got about two flights above her.<p>

"So what brings you to America?" Max asked, turning his head to smile at her. But she wasn't there. "Zoe?" he called out. He heard a snigger and his shoulders slumped in embarrassment at not knowing she had stopped.

"I'm down here, idiot!" Zoe giggled. Normally, Zoe would never call anyone she didn't know well an idiot but she felt so comfortable with Max, unlike she ever had with a person before. It excited her but scared her at the same time. She decided to ignore those feelings and concentrate on the reason she was here. To escape.

Max began to slowly traipse back down the stairs, mumbling incoherently to himself.

"Could've told me," he murmured, feigning annoyance. Zoe laughed once again before walking past him and bopping him on the nose.

"Come on!" she said in a sing-song voice. Max shook his head but he was grinning. He skipped past her and they made their way to the apartment in a comfortable silence. Max took a key out of his pocket and turned it in the lock.

"Here we are!" Max said, arms wide as he stepped into the room. He did a little twirl, making Zoe laugh yet again. She couldn't believe how many times she had laughed that day. He held his hand out for hers and she took it instantly, without thinking. He showed her round the flat ending the tour in the living room. Both collapsed on the sofa.

"So here's one question I need an answer to: how did you know where everything was in this apartment if you've never been here before?" Zoe asked, genuinely intrigued. Max smiled nervously.

"Ah well, I live next door. That's another reason they chose me to pick you up," Max admitted. Zoe simply smiled.

"So I'll be seeing a lot of you, then?" Zoe asked, her smile becoming wider as Max's grin matched hers.

"I suppose you will," Max smirked back. Zoe turned to look and Max and found him staring at her.

"I love America," Zoe whispered happily, as she leaned into his kiss.

End  
file.